

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALAA 1628

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP(KISSINGER, HENRY A.) GT

SUBJ: SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION WITH GUATEMALAN FOREIGN MINISTER-
BELIZE

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY ABOARD THE
SECRETARY'S AIRCRAFT FEBRUARY 24 ENROUTE FROM SAN JOSE
TO GUATEMALA, FOREIGN MINISTER MOLINA ORANTES RETURNED
TO SUBJECT OF BELIZE WHICH HE HAD BEGUN DURING BILATERAL
CONVERSATION IN SAN JOSE, AND STRSSED GUATEMALA'S CON-
VICTION THAT IT WAS ENTITLED TO SOME COMPENSATION FOR
UK FAILURE TO FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE 1859 TREATY.

2. THE SECRETARY ASKED HOW THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAW A
SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID
A SOLUTION SATISFACTORY TO GOG COULD TAKE ONE OF THREE
FORMS: FIRST, AGREEMENT THAT BELIZE WOULD HAVE AN
"ASSOCIATED STATE" STATUS WITH GUATEMALA SIMILAR, IN HIS
WORDS, TO THAT OF PUERTO RICO AND THE UNITED STATE, IN
WHICH BELIZE WOULD HAVE INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BUT
CONTROL OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE, AND FINANCE
WOULD BE RESERVED FOR GUATEMALA. A SECOND ALTERNATIVE,
FOREIGN MINISTER SAID, WOULD BE FOR UK TO MAKE SOME
TERRITORIAL CESSION TO GUATEMALA IN THE SOUTHERN
PART OF BELIZE, IN RETURN FOR GOG AGREEMENT TO
ACCEPT FULL INDEPENDENCE FOR REMAINDER OF BELIZE.

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THIS WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF ASSURING GUATEMALA

OF ACCESS TO THE HIGH SEAS WHICH WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE UNDER PRESENT CONFIGURATION OF BELIZE. THE SECRETARY ASKED WHERE THE FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD PROPOSE DRAWING THE NEW BORDER, AND AFTER SOME HESITATION FOREIGN MINISTER SAID IT COULD BE IN THE AREA OF THE MAYA MOUNTAINS(WHICH EXTEND ROUGHLY FROM 16 DEGREES 15 MINUTES TO 17 DEGREES NORTH LATITUDE). THIRD POSSIBILITY ACCEPTABLE TO GOG, FOREIGN MINISTER SAID, WOULD BE TO PUT THE WHOLE DISPUTE ON ICE FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD.

3. MOLINA SAID THE GOVERNMENT PARTY IN BELIZE WANTS EARLY INDEPENDENT, BUT NOT THE OPPOSITION PARTY. OPINION IN BELIZE ITSELF IS THEREFORE DIVIDED. THE BRITISH OF COURSE WANT TO BE FREE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY AND TO LEAVE, AND THEREFORE ARE SUPPORTING THE PARTY FAVORING EARLY INDEPENDENCE. WHAT GOG MOST FEARS IS THAT UK WILL SIMPLY DECIDE TO PULL OUT.

4. SECRETARY SAID US IS NOT RPT NOT GOINT TO MEDIATE THIS DISPUTE. BUT WILL SPEAK TO THE BRITISH AND URGE THEM TO SEEK A SOLUTION THAT WOULD BE MUTAULLY ACCEPTABLE. US WILL TRY TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE.
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